

P a r t T w o

C o n d i t i o n s



P a r t T w o : C o n t e n t s

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K e y L a n d m a r k s

The Midtown area of the Corcoran Neighborhood is bounded by Lake Street, Hiawatha Avenue, 32nd Street and Cedar Avenue. This area is the northernmost portion of the Corcoran Neighborhood and is adjacent to the Phillips Neighborhood which lies north of Lake Street and east of Hiawatha Avenue.

Key landmarks in the area include the YWCA, the Hi-Lake Shopping Center, the Edison/PPL Elementary School, South Senior High School and the Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery. The Midtown Greenway located just north of the neighborhood, is an old rail corridor transformed into a greenway with transit services that also serves as a landmark for the neighborhood.



Corcoran Midtown Revival Project Area



YWCA Lake Street side



Edison/PPL Elementary 31st Street side



Hi-Lake Shopping Center



South Senior High School



Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery



Midtown Greenway



Edison/PPL Elementary School



Aerial view of Lake Street towards Hiawatha Avenue. Source of photo: www.midtowncommunityworks.org

Land Use Patterns

Land use patterns in the Midtown area consist of a mix of commercial, low and mid density residential, and public/semi-public uses. The commercial uses are principally located along Lake Street and Cedar Avenue. The further away from Lake Street, the more the land use pattern reflects a lower density single family development pattern. Some forms of mixed-use (apartments over retail) are present on Lake Street near Cedar Avenue. Retail uses between Cedar and Hiawatha tend to be more oriented toward automobile traffic (towing company, auto painting company, gas station.) There is a significant presence of public/semi-public uses on or adjacent to the Lake Street corridor including Unity Temple Church, YWCA, Edison/PPL Elementary School, Soldiers Cemetery and South Senior High School. The Cemetery and South High's grounds double as a source of open space for the Midtown area.

The intensity of development within the Midtown area is relatively low for an urban corridor such as Lake Street. The tallest buildings are three stories and occur on the Edison/PPL site and at the corner of Cedar and Lake. Existing floor area ratios for commercial development are well below 0.5 and overall residential densities are generally low due to the predominant land use pattern of single family homes.



Deteriorating Lake Street commercial sites have a negative impact on the corridor



Semi-Public uses on Lake Street provide a diversify of activity ~ Unity Temple Church



Some Lake Street commercial uses are reliant on automobile traffic for businesses



Low density housing (3 to 5 units per acre) is the predominant housing pattern



Mixed-use along Lake Street~apartments or offices over retail



Mid-density apartments (15 to 20 units per acre) are located off of Lake Street



Residential streets south of Lake Street are lined with mature tree canopy



South High provides an unprogrammed area of open space

Demographic & Social Characteristics

The Corcoran neighborhood population increased in the 1990s, growing by 16.3 percent. The white population declined 23.6 percent, while there were substantial increases in the Hispanic/Latino (796 persons, an increase of 788 percent), African/American (367 persons, an increase of 120 percent) and Asian/Pacific Islander (79 persons, an increase of 70.5 percent) populations.

In the nearby neighborhoods and the City of Minneapolis, overall population increased in the 1990s, by 6.3 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively. Consistent with the Corcoran neighborhood, shifting characteristics involve significant losses among white/Caucasians with substantial increases among Hispanic/Latinos, African/American, and Asians/Pacific Islanders.

Ethnic and Racial Trends

	1990		2000		Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
MINNEAPOLIS						
Population	368,383	100.0%	382,618	100.0%	14,235	3.9%
White	288,967	78.4%	249,186	65.1%	-39,781	-13.8%
Black/Afr-Amer	47,948	13.0%	68,818	18.0%	20,870	43.5%
Asian/Pacific	15,723	4.3%	23,744	6.2%	8,021	51.0%
Native American	12,335	3.3%	8,378	2.2%	-3,957	-32.1%
Hispanic/Lat	7,900	2.1%	29,175	7.6%	21,275	269.3%
Other & 2+ Races	3,410	0.9%	3,317	0.9%	-93	-2.7%
CORCORAN						
Population	3,635	100.0%	4,228	100.0%	593	16.3%
White	2,927	80.5%	2,235	52.9%	-692	-23.6%
Black/Afr-Amer	305	8.4%	672	15.9%	367	120.3%
Asian/Pacific	112	3.1%	191	4.5%	79	70.5%
Native American	240	6.6%	195	4.6%	-45	-18.8%
Hispanic/Lat	101	2.8%	897	21.2%	796	788.1%
Other & 2+ Races	51	1.4%	38	0.9%	-13	-25.5%
ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS 1/						
Population	54,448	100.0%	57,866	100.0%	3,418	6.3%
White	39,200	72.0%	32,389	56.0%	-6,811	-17.4%
Black/Afr-Amer	6,540	12.0%	11,118	19.2%	4,578	70.0%
Asian/Pacific	2,380	4.4%	2,585	4.5%	205	8.6%
Native American	5,657	10.4%	3,707	6.4%	-1,950	-34.5%
Hispanic/Lat	1,523	2.8%	8,081	14.0%	6,558	430.6%
Other & 2+ Races	671	1.2%	-14	0.0%	-685	-102.1%

1/ Includes Longfellow, Cooper, Howe, Phillips, Powderhorn Park, Seward and Standish neighborhoods.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; City of Minneapolis.



Market Conditions and Development Outlook

This section presents an analysis of the market conditions and outlooks that will define the prospects for achieving various types of private development in the Corcoran neighborhood. This analysis informs the redevelopment planning process as to potential development activity that the market might support in the near- and long-term future. A brief summary of key findings is as follows:

Regional Economic Issues:

- *The Twin Cities regional economy* has been consistently strong. While growth in employment and gross product are expected to slow along with the national economy, the Twin Cities economy is expected to continue to show positive growth. *Please see Section I.A of Appendix B.*
- *Professional services industries* comprise the largest and fastest growing segments of the Twin Cities economy. Continued growth in these sectors provides high paying jobs, driving growth in personal income and creating new opportunities for high quality commercial and residential development. *Please see Section I.A.of Appendix B*
- *Recent demographic growth* in the Corcoran neighborhood has emphasized increases in the Hispanic and African-American populations. This increasing ethnic and racial diversification is consistent with similar trends in nearby communities. *Please see Section I.B.of Appendix B*

Corcoran Retail Market Issues and Opportunities:

- *High Visibility Location:* The Hiawatha Avenue/Lake Street intersection offers a highly visible location with high traffic flows and well established retail anchors. This makes the area a strong location for prospective retail businesses in the immediate surroundings. Located on the western side of the intersection, the Corcoran Neighborhood offers direct proximity to the future light rail transit station, but offers a poorer link to the Target, Rainbow, and Cub Foods destinations on the east side of the intersection. *Please see Section II.A. of Appendix B*
- *Underserved Market:* While the Hi-Lake area serves a market trade area that extends throughout southeast Minneapolis, it sustains a significant “out-

flow” of household retail spending, indicating that the market offers opportunities to capture the household spending within the existing trade area. *Please see Section II.A.of Appendix B*

- *Retail Niches*: Particular market niches that appear to offer opportunity include: groceries, specialty foods, eating & drinking, other miscellaneous/ specialty retail stores. Such stores could find suitable locations in a shopping center configuration, or in streetfront locations offering high visibility to vehicular as well as pedestrian traffic. *Please see Section II.A.of Appendix B*
- *Public Market Opportunity/Solution*: In striving to maximize profits, private developers are often reluctant to embrace unfamiliar formats, which may be more suitable for minority groups and urban clientele seeking unique goods and services. A public market offers an opportunity for one or more public organizations to develop and operate a facility that would be unique to the Twin Cities. The public market can be defined as a publicly managed space featuring retail (indoor or outdoor) floor area, typically without permanent interior walls. Vendors are typically independent, locally owned businesses occupying 200 to 500-square-foot stalls. Vendors offer a broad range of goods, including prepared and unprepared food, handcrafted goods, locally produced goods, and specialty items such as jewelry, unique food products, clothing, souvenirs and other such items. Relatively low costs and leasing commitments provide opportunities for new businesses from within the community (and throughout the region) that – unlike many “mainstream” retailers — target the unique demands and reflect the skills and heritage of the community. *Please see Section III.A.of Appendix B*
- *Public Market Suitability*: The Corcoran neighborhood and other nearby communities feature a unique racial and ethnic blend. Hispanic, African, African-American, Native American and Asian populations mix with white persons of European lineage in these neighborhoods. This type of mixed community is suitable for public markets, because this type of community: (1) generates demand for unusual goods that may be popular among various ethnic groups, and that would remain unserved by “mainstream” retail franchises; and (2) offers persons with skills (agricultural, culinary, craft-related) in producing specialty items that may be traditional to particular

cultures (e.g., woven goods, decorative items, unique food products). The public market provides low-cost entrepreneurial opportunities for such persons to produce and market unique products. *Please see Section III.A. of Appendix B.*

Residential Market Issues and Opportunities:

- *Urban residential development in Minneapolis* has focused on upscale, attached homes, generally located near downtown Minneapolis. These have achieved rapid absorption, despite their price ranges, which generally start at \$350,000. *Please see Section II.B. of Appendix B.*
- *The Minneapolis rental apartment market* features vacancy rates of one to two percent, with rapidly increasing rents. Rents at new apartment developments have targeted \$1.50 per square foot, generally in excess of \$1,000 for a two-bedroom unit. *Please see Section II.B. of Appendix B.*
- *Market opportunities for residential development* in the Corcoran neighborhood include:
 - o Senior Housing, in independent as well as more care-intensive formats;
 - o For-sale attached homes in moderate (\$150,000 - \$250,000) price tiers;
 - o High-quality rental apartments situated close to amenities and public transit stations. *Please see Section II.B. of Appendix B.*
- *Primary constraints upon new developments* involve increasing land cost, construction costs, and the availability of development opportunities in more remote suburban locations, where undeveloped and relatively inexpensive land may present simpler development opportunities. *Please see Section II.B. of Appendix B.*
- *Cohousing* offers an alternative residential development model based on the desire for a greater sense of community. Communities range in size from roughly 15 to 40 households, and can embrace any detached or attached structural form. While dwelling units are typically self-contained, separate homes, cohousing communities offer community areas that might

include recreational facilities, guest rooms, and a community kitchen/dining area for one to three shared meals per week. The essential distinguishing factor of cohousing communities involves the development and property management processes. Cohousing projects are driven not by developers or real estate companies, but by residents. In cohousing developments, residents assemble before development occurs and collectively proceed through the (often lengthy) processes of site selection and acquisition, project design, permitting, financing, construction, and management of their communities. *Please see Section III.B. of Appendix B*

The full Market Conditions and Development Outlooks report is found in Appendix B. Section I presents an overview of underlying economic and demographic issues. This is followed in Section II with analyses of the retail and residential sectors. Finally, recognizing that the private development community may not initially recognize workable opportunities in the environment, Section III presents descriptions of some non-traditional development solutions that may not attract — or rely on — the private development community.



Transportation and Transit

The Midtown area is served by several major roadways including Hiawatha Avenue, Lake Street and Cedar Avenue. Hiawatha Avenue and Cedar Avenue are continuous north-south streets that connect Downtown Minneapolis to suburbs. Lake Street serves a similar capacity in an east-west direction and spans the entire City of Minneapolis. Average daily traffic volumes on Cedar and Lake range between 13,000 and 20,000 trips per day and on Hiawatha, 20,000 to 30,000 trips per day. High traffic volumes pose a challenge to creating and maintaining a pedestrian friendly environment. An alternative route providing east-west traffic flow is 32nd Street, which also provides an alternative access point to Hiawatha. 31st Street ends in a cul-de-sac at Hiawatha. North-south vehicle travel is disruptive on the east end of the neighborhood because of the non perpendicular route taken by Hiawatha. Sidewalks are maintained on all city streets and a connection is made through the Edison/PPL site, connecting the neighborhood south of 31st Street to Lake Street and the future LRT station location. LRT is expected to be running along Hiawatha Avenue by 2004.

Transit services include:

- 19~Local bus route providing service on Cedar Avenue every 20 minutes on weekdays and every 30 minutes on weekends/holidays. The route connects the Robbinsdale Hubbard Market Place to the Mall of America.
- 21~Local bus route providing service along Lake Street every 7 to 15 minutes on weekdays and 10 to 20 minutes on weekends/holidays. The route connects the Uptown Transit Station with downtown St. Paul.
- 22~Local bus route on Cedar Avenue providing service between Brooklyn Park through downtown Minneapolis to South Minneapolis every 7 to 15 minutes on weekdays and 20 minutes on weekends.
- 43~Local bus route providing Saturday service serves south Minneapolis and runs through the Midtown area on Lake Street every 45 minutes.
- 52A~University of Minnesota Local/Limited stop bus route along Cedar Avenue connecting the Mall of America to the University of Minnesota and running on weekday am and pm peak periods only.
- 191~Express bus route along Lake Street connecting the Uptown Transit station with downtown St. Paul. Bus runs on weekday peak hours with 30 minute service.



Lake Street east of 21st separated by a median. Lane widths and alignments are varied to accommodate recent developments and streetscape improvements.



31st Street looking west from 22nd Avenue. This street serves cut through traffic avoiding Lake Street and provides spill over parking for the Y.



Pedestrian connections are maintained through the Edison/PPL school site to Lake Street and the future LRT station.



Bus Stop at Cedar Avenue and Lake Street could provide better pedestrian amenities for the Y.



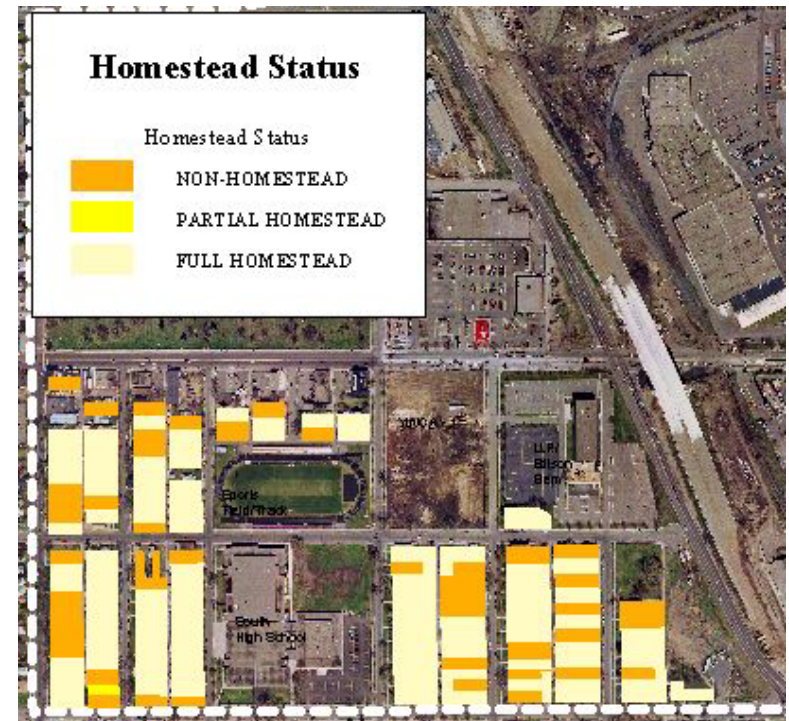
Housing

Housing units within the Midtown area consist largely of owner occupied single family homes. Representation of owner occupancy is best illustrated by mapping Homestead Status as seen at right. Other housing include apartment buildings ranging from smaller four unit buildings to larger 24 or more unit buildings. Duplex, triplex and fourplex units are the most common multi-family units in the project area. Apartments are located along 31st Street south of the YWCA and along Cedar Avenue south of 31st Street.

South Minneapolis neighborhoods have historically been able to provide a fair amount of affordable housing; however, home prices and apartment rents have increased substantially in the last 5 to 10 years making it more difficult to obtain affordable housing. The housing stock in the Corcoran community is generally in good condition despite much it being more than 80 years old. Aggressive home improvement and renovation programs have helped homeowners and rental owners keep the stock in a relatively good condition.



The City Assessing data contains a general ranking category of housing conditions. When mapped, this data reflects an aggregation of properties that are in poor condition. The map represents an area of influence around these properties where poor conditions were noted.



Properties that are occupied by the owner or a relative of the owner can qualify for homestead tax credits. Generally, those properties shown as non-homestead are duplexes, triplexes or fourplexes. Some single family homes may be rental properties and are thus non-homestead.



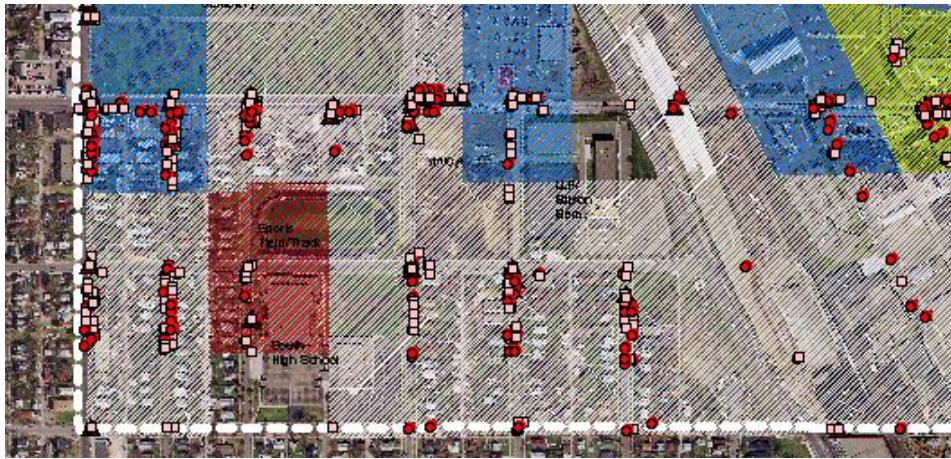
Apartments over retail at Lake Street and Cedar Avenue provide a source of affordable housing.



70 percent of the housing stock in the Corcoran Neighborhood consists of single family homes.

Crime

A key factor contributing to neighborhood stability and a concern of business owners and residents in the Midtown area is crime. The Minneapolis Police Department generates statistics on a regular basis under the CODEFOR program. These statistics are presented below on an aggregate block level illustrating trends between 1998 and 2000 and in incidents by type of crime. The data represents Type I crimes against persons (robbery or murder), Type I crimes against property (car theft, burglary, shoplifting) and Type II crimes (vandalism, curfew violations, property damage, check forgery, narcotics, loitering and prostitution.) More information on crime statistics can be obtained from the Minneapolis Police Department CODEFOR Unit.



Crimes are recorded in the location where the incident report is written up by the arresting officer. While the data recording may not be extremely accurate, the analysis helps identify broader trends of crime over a period of time. This data represents crimes between 1998 and 2000. Source of data is the Minneapolis Police Department CODEFOR Unit.



This data represents total crime incidents between 1998 and 2000 that occurred on a particular block. The blocks in the Midtown area that presented the most crimes include the Cedar and Lake area, 21st and Lake, and South High. Source of data is the Minneapolis Police Department CODEFOR Unit.

Urban Design

Discussion at neighborhood meetings for this project and others tend to focus around issues of “urban character” or “urban design.” Lake Street is an urban corridor. Development patterns are highly reflective of this at key nodes along the entire corridor through Minneapolis. However, at some nodes, redevelopment has begun to introduce a more suburban character. One has to look no further than across Hiawatha Avenue to Lake Street and 27th Avenue to see contemporary suburban development and its impact on an urban area.

Urban design is not only part of building design and layout, but also part of the street and pedestrian path system. A connected grid of streets and sidewalks that is lined by boulevard trees is a pattern cherished by urban neighborhoods. This system in Corcoran and other neighborhoods is in danger of eroding, succumbing to desires to curb growing traffic problems and accommodate new development. Traffic and parking problems are inherent to urban neighborhoods. All of these factors contribute to an area’s “walkability” and pedestrian friendliness.

Good urban design can reduce crime trends and patterns by making areas more visible and more usable by the general public. Strategic lighting, landscaping, and reducing signage in windows of retail establishments are strategies for crime prevention.

Conditions



Corporate architecture at Hi-Lake Shopping Center



Building orientation to parking lot and not to Lake Street...an inconsistent pattern.



More modern development pattern breaks the urban pattern of 2 to 0 foot setbacks.



Retail uses built out to the street.



Mixed-use with residential over street level retail...consistent with an urban character.



Building orientation and surface parking lot detract from pedestrian environment.



The large scale of the YWCA and lack of architectural diversity are pedestrian unfriendly in what is otherwise a nice street.



South High's football field is "walled" off from the neighborhood and could be a greater asset.

